

# ecoNews — Wire —

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

**September 2, 2004**

For immediate release

- 1. Drinking water state revolving loan program provides low-interest loans for 18 Iowa projects**
- 2. Public meeting to discuss results of Lake Darling bacteria study**
- 3. Changes made to manure management plan rules**

## **DRINKING WATER STATE REVOLVING LOAN PROGRAM PROVIDES LOW-INTEREST LOANS FOR 18 IOWA PROJECTS**

DES MOINES — The DNR has awarded \$21,226,000 in low interest loans to improve drinking water systems across the state.

The DNR's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) will provide three percent interest loans, to be repaid over a period of up to 20 years, to the following 18 projects:

- Calamus (\$759,000)
- Clarinda (\$7,346,000)
- Edgewood (\$210,000)
- Ellsworth (\$1,350,000)
- Emmetsburg (\$3,400,000)
- Exira (\$563,000)
- Hudson (\$700,000)
- Iowa City Regency Mobile Home Park (\$435,000)
- Joice (\$641,000)
- Keota (\$464,000)
- Laurens (\$356,000)
- Lockridge (\$335,000)
- Lowden (\$514,000)
- Maynard (\$339,000)
- Merrill (\$300,000)
- Ossian (\$578,000)
- Palo (\$2,719,000)

- Willow Stream Estate Homeowners' Association (\$217,000)

The DWSRF provides loans to water systems seeking infrastructure improvements that will allow the water system to continue providing safe drinking water. The flexibility of the program allows loan recipients to use the fund to rehabilitate existing systems, connect residences currently served by contaminated private wells to public water supplies, and to make other improvements related to enhancing public health protection.

“Using the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund will allow us to bring a safe public water supply to the City of Joice and will allow us to retain control of the maintenance and pricing of our system for the benefit of our community,” said Mark Thoma, mayor of Joice.

The DWSRF program accepts loan applications throughout the year.

**For more information on the DWSRF program, contact Dennis Alt at (515) 725-0275 or Jennifer Bunton at (515) 725-0298.**

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## **PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS RESULTS OF LAKE DARLING BACTERIA STUDY**

BRIGHTON — A public meeting will be held Sept. 29 in Brighton to discuss results from an ongoing DNR study that is working to determine the source of high bacteria levels at Lake Darling.

Over the past year, the DNR has conducted a source-tracking project in the Lake Darling watershed, which has had a history of high bacteria levels at the beach and in the lake. At the public meeting, DNR staff will discuss several source-tracking methods that were used to identify sources of bacteria and will be available for a question and answer session.

The meeting will be held at the Brighton Community Center at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 29.

**For more information, contact Janice Boekhoff at (319) 931-6050 or Eric O'Brien at (319) 335-1575.**

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## **CHANGES MADE TO MANURE MANAGEMENT PLAN RULES**

DES MOINES — The Iowa phosphorus index and several rules are creating changes for producers who submit manure management plans (MMPs) to the DNR.

The phosphorus index, or P index, will be phased in for MMPs over the next four years. Producers who have not submitted an original MMP to the DNR by Oct. 25, 2004 will need to incorporate the P index into their plan.

A number of rule changes became effective Aug. 25, including additional requirements for nitrogen-based manure application and for recordkeeping.

The rule change regarding nitrogen-based manure application means that producers will no longer be able to apply nitrogen (N) at 1.5 times the N rate when soil tests indicate that low or very low soil phosphorus or potassium is present. If an MMP has already been developed for fall 2004 using the 1.5 times N rate, those rates can be used for fall manure application.

However, MMPs must be updated before submitting the 2005 annual update to the DNR to reflect this rule change. Producers are asked to indicate this change on the MMP update short form.

Recent changes in recordkeeping rules mean that producers must keep records of several new items in addition to the records that are already required. These new items are the factors used to calculate the manure rate and include:

- Optimum yield for the planned crop
- Types of nitrogen credits and amounts
- Remaining crop nitrogen needed
- Nitrogen content and first year nitrogen availability of the manure
- Maximum allowable manure application rate

Also effective Aug. 25, producers must keep their current manure management plan within 30 miles of the production site. Additionally, the following recordkeeping requirements are required when the P index is required:

- P content of the manure
- If P-based rates are used, indicate the crop rotation that the rate is based on and the P removal of that rotation
- A copy of the soil test lab results of the fields in the plan

Producers are still required to keep records of the date, location, rate and method of manure application.

Producers should retain old application records, as rules will go into effect Aug. 25, 2006 requiring producers to keep five years of records on file instead of three.

Changes have also been made to policies regarding first year nitrogen availability of liquid swine manure. Previously, MMPs have been approved when 75 to 100 percent of the N in the manure was considered available for plants in the first year. Effective Aug. 25, 2004, original plans must assume 100 percent N availability of liquid swine manure in the first year of application. Existing plans that use less than 100 percent N availability must change to 100 percent when their P index based plan is due. This change will make

DNR policy consistent with Iowa State University (ISU) recommendations for first year availability of liquid swine manure. The ISU Extension publication Pm-1811 states, “All of the N in swine manure from liquid handling systems is available the first year of application.”

Also, effective Aug. 25, 2004, if an actual manure sample is used for developing an MMP, the actual volume or weight of manure must also be used. Plans can no longer be built using an actual manure analysis for concentration and standard table values for manure volume, or vice versa.

**For more information, contact Jeremy Klatt at (515) 281-8690.**